

Native American Caregiver Support Program (NACSP)

Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe

THE JAMESTOWN S’KLALLAM TRIBE is located on the North Olympic Peninsula in Northwest Washington State. The Elders Nutrition and Support Program is administered by the Jamestown S’Klallam Health and Human Service Department. The mission of the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe’s Health and Human Service Department is to enhance the health, social strength and self-reliance of the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe, to advance the Jamestown S’Klallam community through education, advocacy, social and health services, and to serve the unique needs of the Tribal Community with professionalism, integrity, creativity and cultural sensitivity.

The Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe received a Native American Caregiver Support Program demonstration grant in 2001. The purpose the “Empowering Caregivers of Elders” caregivers support program is to provide caregiver support services to families while maintaining the highest degree of elder self-determination.

FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCING

Jamestown S’Klallam developed a support program for caregivers by adapting Family Group Conferencing and matching the approach with the best of family support practices for on-going services. According to Program Director, Liz Mueller, “Family Group Conferencing was developed in New Zealand in an attempt to help the indigenous people keep their children within their families. It was designed to be consistent with historical family decision-making practices by bringing the family together and giving them the opportunity to

make decisions and develop plans.”

Liz felt that this concept could be used to help keep the elder in the home. The conference allows the development of a plan for the caregiver and the elder that is agreed on and supported by the entire family. The conference creates a “talking circle”.



Liz Mueller and Jessica Wasnock

Family Group Conferencing empowers those who participate by bringing families together and giving them the credit for being able to make good decisions for those who are vulnerable.

LESSON LEARNED

Family group conferencing is labor intensive. A great deal of preparation is required by the case manager, including

arranging for the conference, bringing everyone together, and gathering all the necessary information. There is also the need for follow up and to provide ongoing support to the caregiver and their family after the conference.

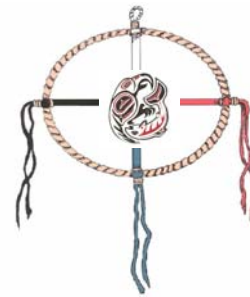
However, those working with this project feel that the cultural values of Native peoples are more likely to understand when sufficient time is taken to hear from all family members. They accept that to do something well takes time and effort. Caregivers and their elders are important and taking time for them is valued. They have found that the project has been successful.

In developing the program, they found that the Case Manager needs to have the experience to handle many different, and sometimes difficult, group situations. For instance:

- There may be family conflicts;
- The elder may feel that they aren't being heard;
- Everyone may feel that the Case Manager is trying to make all the decisions;
- The plan may be weak; and
- There may need to be compromise to find a balance between the needs of the caregiver and the elder.

Therefore, an important lesson learned through this demonstration is the importance of training the right individuals on this process.

Empowering Caregivers Of Elders



Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe

TRAINING MANUAL

The training manual, "Empowering Caregivers of Elders", is available. The manual introduces you to the steps in the Empowering Caregivers of Elders Model. It walks you through the process. The manual walks you through the program from start to finish. It includes forms, checklists, tips, vignettes and other useful information.

For additional information regarding this project and the manual, contact:

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

AoA recognizes the importance of making information readily available to consumers, professionals, researchers, and students. Our website provides information for and about older persons, their families, and professionals involved in aging programs and services. For more information about AoA, please contact: US Dept of Health and Human Services, Administration on Aging, Washington, DC 20201; phone: (202) 401-4541; fax (202) 357-3560; Email: aoainfo@aoa.gov; or contact our website at: www.aoa.gov